



*Advocating better skills, jobs, and incomes*

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 285**

**Vehicle Registration - Fee Due to Outstanding Warrant - Repeal**

TO: Hon. William C. Smith, Jr., and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Job Opportunities Task Force

DATE: February 6, 2024

The Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that develops and advocates policies and programs to increase the skills, job opportunities, and incomes of low-wage workers and job seekers in Maryland. **JOTF supports Senate Bill 285, which repeal the fee assessed by the MVA against an applicant to register a vehicle that had previously been refused due to an outstanding warrant.**

JOTF supports this legislation as a common sense measure to limit unnecessary financial penalties being levied against vulnerable populations. According to the MVA itself, the restoration fee is now part of an outdated model that was intended primarily to cover the administrative costs of enforcing the registration refusal. However, the fee is now unnecessary due to modern infrastructure upgrades to MVA's technology systems. MVA also notes the fee is charged primarily to customers who are already facing financial hardships. The removal of the fee is intended to help streamline MVA's operations without unnecessary financial hardships to customers who can least afford it. Further, MVA advises that owners are able to circumvent the restoration fee on a particular vehicle by registering a different vehicle after the warrant has been satisfied, as the restoration fee is tied to the previously registered vehicle.

JOTF consistently supports efforts to help increase access to jobs and employment opportunities for low wage Marylanders. Lack of transportation is a consistent barrier amongst Marylanders, and a lack of proper vehicle registration forces many Marylanders to either risk arrest and incarceration while driving to work, or limits their access to jobs that require a personal vehicle. Removing the fee assessed after a previous refusal due to an outstanding warrant so an individual may register the vehicle properly will help open career options for Marylanders.

**For these reasons, JOTF supports Senate Bill 285 and urges a favorable report.**

**For more information, contact:**

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